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Loan default rates on the rise for college students in Miss., across country

BY EMILY DAVIS
The Daily Mississippian

As tuition rises and the economy falls, college students are having an increasingly difficult time paying for their education.

Larry D. Ridgeway, vice chancellor for student affairs, said that the University is seeing an increase in students defaulting on their loans, but added that Mississippi students were defaulting less than the national average among students.

According to statistics released by the University, the default repayment rate of Mississippi students in 2008 was 4.9 percent, while the national average of students defaulting was 7 percent. In 2009, the default average in Mississippi rose to 6.1 percent, and although the national average is unknown for 2009, it is expected to continually rise.

“We have always been well below the national average,” Ridgeway said. “Ole Miss students have always been able to pay, and hopefully we educate them enough to be able to get a good job.”

Ridgeway said students who graduate from a public university typically have less trouble repaying their loans.

“For-profit universities, such as online colleges, have lower graduation and retention rates because they sell education on the idea of going back to college,” Ridgeway said.

Steven Bennett, financial aid adviser for the Desoto, Grena-

da and Oxford campuses of the University of Mississippi, said the Oxford campus has better graduation and retention rates than the University’s satellite campuses.

Dewey Knight, associate director for the office of financial aid, said students attending for-profit and satellite campuses often have higher default rates on their bonds.

“The reason default rates are higher at the for-profit universities and branched campuses is because they don’t feel like they received anything out of their education, so they have less of an incentive to pay it back,” Knight said.

The government provides federal money in the form of student loans – the repayment of which can be deferred until after graduation.

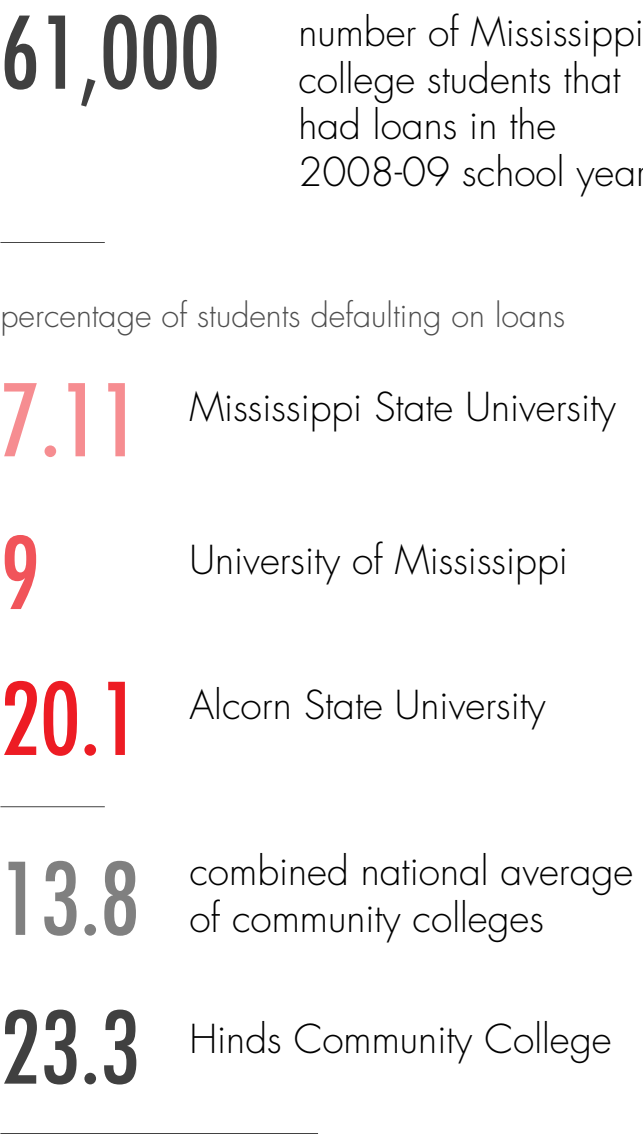
The interest on a subsidized loan is paid by the federal government, but an unsubsidized loan requires the student to pay the full amount, plus interest. For many graduates, the debt acquired in college cannot be repaid, and defaulting is their only way out.

The Chronicle of Higher Education explains that the fundamental problem is the growing number of people borrowing too much to invest in a college education that, for them, will yield a rate of return that is too low to service the debt load they have accumulated.

Bennett said that Mississippi has created programs like the

See RATES, PAGE 5

by the numbers



Information obtained from figures released by the U.S. Department of Education in February 2011. Data includes students who entered for repayment in 2008. It excludes borrowers who defaulted in two years or fewer.

this week

OVERBY CENTER AUDITORIUM
INAUGURAL GILDER-JORDAN LECTURE

Barbara Fields, Professor of History at Columbia University, will deliver the inaugural Gilder-Jordan Lecture in Southern History.

Fields, who earned her PhD in History at Yale, is the author of *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century*. Her books and articles have influenced a generation of scholars to examine race as what she has termed “a purely ideological notion.”

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inside

OPINION
THE BALANCING ACT



LIFESTYLES
A MORNING AT BOTTLETREE



SPORTS
BREWER RETURNS HOME



County Supervisors, Board of Aldermen further discuss hospital plans

BY LEE HARRIS
The Daily Mississippian

The Lafayette County Board of Supervisors met Monday and continued discussions on building a new site for the Baptist Memorial Hospital.

The board, which is comprised of five members who will ultimately vote on the Memorandum of Understanding, received an update from their attorneys but did not take any action on the matter.

The Memorandum of Understanding, which outlines the intent to sell the lease on the current hospital to Baptist

Memorial, must be voted on by the Board of Supervisors and Oxford’s Board of Aldermen.

Janice Antonow, alderman of Ward III, said the vote was likely to be a formality until Baptist Memorial purchased a piece of property on Highway 6 and presented it as a possibility for the location.

“We were moving right along until this came up,” Antonow said.

“It was a total surprise that this location was even being considered.”

Ulysses Howell, alderman of Ward IV, shares the sentiment that the hospital needs

to remain closer to the city, taking into consideration the businesses and communities that have located themselves around the hospital.

“I hope it’s not on [Highway] 6,” he said.

“Let’s hope they take into consideration the citizens, doctor’s offices and retirement communities in Oxford.”

City officials acknowledged that the hospital’s focus is fulfilling its own needs as a medical facility.

“I’m sure their concern is for the good of the hospital,” Antonow said.

“But I want to know it’s not something that will be detri-

mental to the city of Oxford.”

In addition to the location on Highway 6, the hospital is also considering locations on the east side of Oxford, near Highway 7.

In early February, a deal was reached in which the hospital bought out their share of the lease from the county and city.

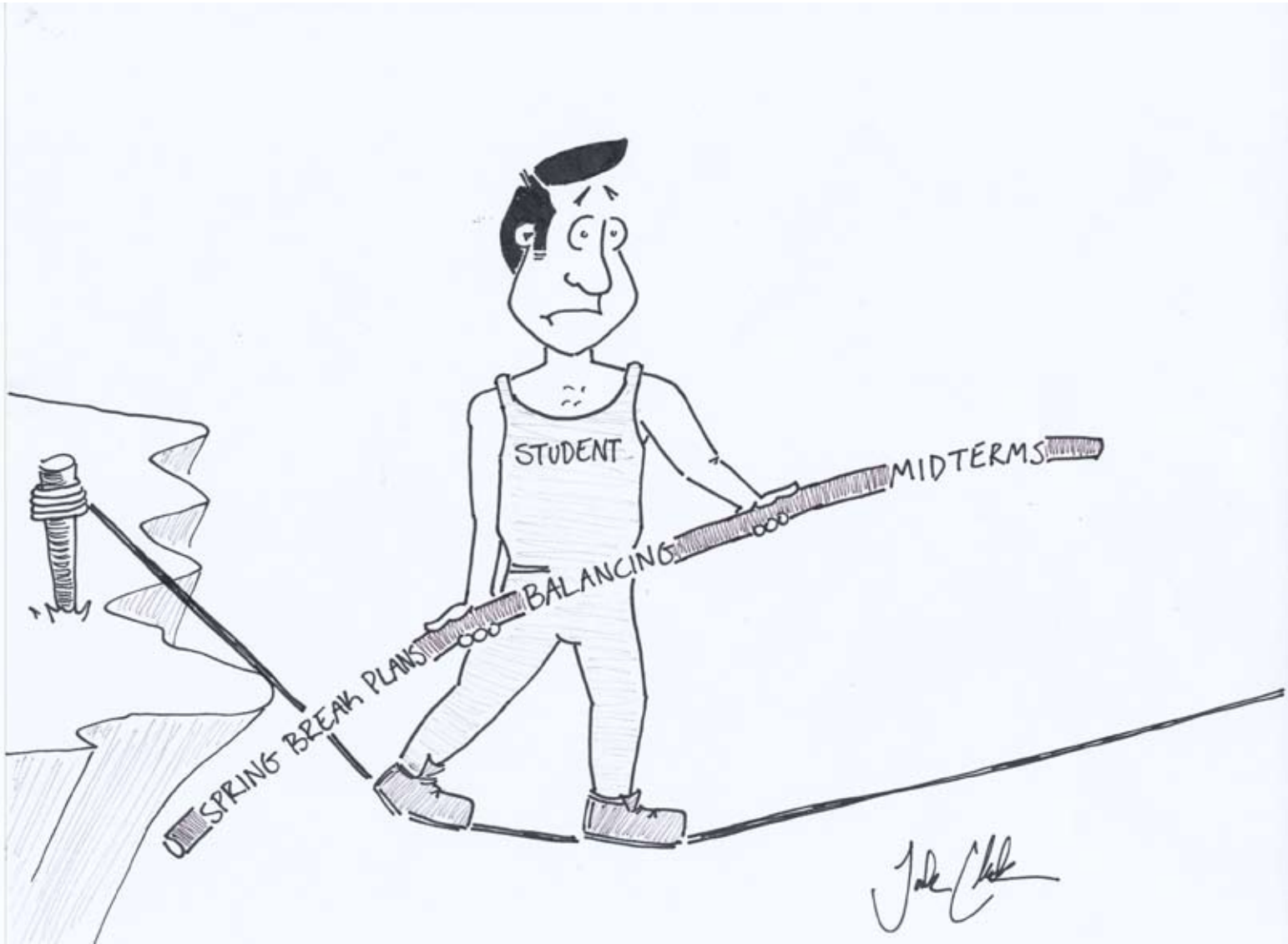
The Oxford Board of Aldermen will have a meeting on Wednesday to further discuss the draft of the Memorandum of Understanding.

There is currently not a date set for a vote on the memorandum of either board.

The sale of the hospital is pending until the groups vote.



BY JOSH CLARK
Cartoonist



Feminist: The Real Definition



BY LEXI THOMAN
Columnist

I'll begin this column with a simple question: Are you a feminist?

This is where most of you answer with a resounding no, a negligible amount say yes and the rest decline to answer.

Whatever the reason may be, it is difficult to deny the fact that the term holds a negative connotation in our society, one with which many of us would rather not associate ourselves.

When you think of what a feminist is, I am sure a good number of you think of the radical, bra-burning, man-hating stereotypes portrayed in the media and your high-school textbooks.

While these revolutionary women are – by definition – feminists, the term applies to many more people than just the radical factions from American History.

There is only one prerequisite to being a feminist, and that is the support of gender equality.

In order to support my ar-

gument, I will consult one of my favorite literary friends, the English dictionary.

“Feminist – n. a person who advocates equal rights for women.”

Note what is missing from this definition: any specifics regarding the characteristics of said feminist, gender or otherwise. This means that Mr. Frat Star can be just as much of a feminist as a member of The Feminist Majority.

When looking back on the Women's Rights movement in the U.S., it is no surprise that the word “feminist” has taken on a powerful stereotype. After all, it took strong women – and men as well – to take on the uphill battle.

Our protection from sex discrimination in the U.S. comes from a famous piece of legislation. Proposed by John F. Kennedy, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is often regarded as one of the most important pieces of Civil Rights law ever passed.

Although the act is widely

praised for protecting all citizens against racial discrimination, it protects U.S. citizens – men and women alike – against gender discrimination as well.

Even though 13 women served in the entire congressional body in 1964, some may be still be surprised to learn that the gender discrimination clause was introduced with the intent of killing the entire bill.

The move was the brainchild of Howard Smith, a representative and renowned Virginian segregationist who saw his proviso as a joke and, more importantly, as a means of killing the Civil Rights Bill once and for all. What Howard did not expect, however, was for Representative Martha Griffiths to take up the proposal, build a serious platform and begin lobbying for its support.

Thanks to her efforts, Americans now enjoy equal rights in voting, access to public education, employment, public accommodations and federally-assisted programs – regardless

of gender.

At the time, Griffiths was attacked as a radical feminist for her push for equal rights. Today, 102 women serve in the 111th Congress, and 57 percent of college students are female.

The fact of the matter is, my life as a woman in 2011 would be much different if these “radical feminist” trailblazers like Martha Griffiths had not pushed for equality over the past 50 years.

Ladies: To be a feminist, you do not need to stop shaving, burn your bras, denounce relationships or march on Washington. You are free to go to college and to actually use your degree in the workforce. You are also free to get married and raise a family, go to work or both.

Gentlemen: You don't have to be female to be a feminist. All you have to do is believe in equal rights.

So, I will ask you once again: Are you a feminist?

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There are certain places for certain things



BY ALEXANDRA DONALDSON
Columnist

Members of the Westboro Baptist church do not mind protesting at military funerals. Only, these protesters are picketing against gay people in the military.

For those who are unaware, the Westboro Baptist Church is a radical congregation in Topeka, Kan.,

that takes pride in flaunting its beliefs for the whole world to see and (mostly) laugh at.

The church has caused controversy in the news for years, and, despite its inappropriate actions, the Supreme Court has once again ruled in favor of the church and its First Amendment rights. But protesting at any funeral – especially a military funeral – is disrespectful.

First off, let me say that I have nothing against homosexuals or the public's right to protest. You are who you are, and you're welcome to your own opinions.

Protesting is a right every American has, but freedom of speech is a privilege and needs to be kept in the proper places.

Let's think about this: Freedom of speech is in the constitution as the First Amendment. Soldiers had to fight for the freedom of speech when we wanted to gain our independence. Most of the soldiers lost their lives for our right to the freedom of speech. It's like the protestors of Westboro Baptist church are spitting on the men and women who risk their lives day after day to give them that freedom to protest

those funerals.

While they are restricted to certain places and must be a certain distance from the site of the actual burial or service, you can still hear the screams from your seats and see the signs on your way in and out.

The death of a soldier can be especially traumatic to family and friends, considering they might not have seen their son or daughter for months with them being overseas.

With such a sudden death, the family of the fallen would want to grieve on their own, and they have the right to.

The members of Westboro Baptist should ask themselves this: WWJD? I promise it doesn't involve heinous posters and scorched flags.

Protesting at a military funeral does not seem like a very Christian thing to do. Where is their respect for the fallen?

While the members of Westboro Baptist are welcome to their First Amendment rights just as much as every other citizen, they need to respect the privacy of a grieving family and keep their hateful words within the confines of Fred Phelps' Sunday sermons.

Public broadcasting a staple of the American people



BY AMELIA CAMURATI
Opinion Editor

With the budget ax coming down once again, funding is being cut from departments all across the spectrum.

Congress has proposed \$35 billion in cuts from government programs including Planned Parenthood, college aid, school grants, housing subsidies and public broadcasting. While most of these programs will only be losing a portion of their federal funding if this bill passes, public broadcasting is at risk of losing every dime it receives from the government.

programming for both radio and television. They sponsor National Public Radio (NPR) and Public Broadcast Systems (PBS), along with shows like "Sesame Street" and "The NewsHour."

Across the country, CPB helps fund nearly 1,300 locally-owned and operated public television and radio stations and is the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television and related online services.

Last week, information was released from a survey of the American public about the decision to cut or not cut funding from public broadcasting.

A 10 percent cut, sure. 20 percent? Fine. But the entire amount of federal funding for a government-founded organization?

That's just absurd.

An overwhelming 83 percent of the Democrats disagreed with the decision, which is to be expected. The shocking number was the 56 percent of Republicans that also disagreed.

Of the Americans surveyed, 69 percent opposed the idea.

Below the information for this study, a brilliant Libertarian for Freedom (as he stated clearly) had some words of wisdom for the surveyors.

"We don't watch you, your ratings are a joke and you don't deserve to

exist."

Really? You officially sound like a hypocrite, not to mention a moron.

CPB is a driving force behind the education of people in towns small and large across our nation. I can think of 10 things off the top of my head that should be vanquished before public broadcasting, but listing any of them here would certainly cause an outrage.

I have a friend who almost always has NPR on in his car. While I'm not a huge fan of radio news, I've heard a few things while in that Corolla that I haven't seen or heard covered elsewhere.

Many are under the impression that all CPB does is produce factual

television shows that don't really interest anyone outside the field and boring radio broadcasts.

When you look at the remainder of your line-up options on different television channels and radio stations, you'll see that Snooki isn't going to be speaking, nor will Flavor Flav.

The education of this nation is already under fire with subpar school systems littering the country and the dropout rate climbing year after year.

I'm all about trimming the fat and bringing that deficit down to a normal number without trillion following it, but priorities seem a bit out of order in Washington.



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VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

Oxford still waits for Google Fiber selection

BY MALLORY SIMERVILLE
The Daily Mississippian

After Oxford's submission for Google Fiber national broadband Internet in 2010, some concern has surfaced because a decision has not yet been made.

Google was originally set to make an announcement in late 2010 as to which city or town would win the broadband Internet.

Stewart Rutledge volunteered to help Oxford receive the Internet service and has been the leader of Oxford's participation in the project.

"I made a promise to the city that I would try to help win this contest that Google offered," Rutledge said.

He received help from citizens to create a website and raised awareness, as well as the attention of Google.

Rutledge said Oxford intentionally did not spend a lot of money in attempt to get Google's attention because he was afraid Google would not respond.

Google recently hired a new vice president of access services, Milo Medin, who posted on the official Google blog about the progress on Dec. 15, 2010.

"We're sorry for this delay, but we want to make sure we get this right," Medin said.

"To be clear, we're not re-opening our selection process – we simply need more time to decide than we'd anticipated. Stay tuned for an

announcement in early 2011."

Rutledge said that in the fine print, Google reserved the right to choose or not to choose, but feels they have received millions of dollars in free marketing.

"Google's lack of action concerned me, so I went to the city and told them we didn't lose the contest, because in fact, nothing happened," he said. "I would like to use this opportunity to issue a challenge to Google to do what it promised."

Rutledge made a presentation for the Board of Aldermen at the March 1 meeting, informing them of the progress with the project.

In his follow-up presentation, he showed two of Google's websites that he said he believes have not

been updated, although he has not yet tried to contact Google or anyone involved.

Rutledge said he believes Google should take some kind of action, whether that be distributing laptops or selecting a winner.

"They should take the steps that they can take right now to achieve their stated goals of broadband access, and if they wondered how to do that I'd be glad to explain how they can have that done in the next week," Rutledge said.

Rutledge also said he believes Oxford should have the Internet access because we not only have the University, but a vast amount of rural areas around us as well.

He said it would provide broadband to the under-served.

In 2010, Google offered to select a community to install ultra high-speed internet free of charge.

The Internet speed would be 100 times faster than most Americans have today, with a speed of over 1 gigabit per second.

Google asked cities to reach out and prove to them why they should be chosen.

The announcement created a frenzy of interest, with more than 500 communities applying to become the home for Google's experiment.

Entries included satirical YouTube videos and a Googlefest in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Topeka, Kan. even changed its name to Google, Kan. in order to win the contract.

Round Table Serves Up More Than Drinks

BY MASON MCMILLION
The Daily Mississippian

A new Southern-style restaurant has come to the Square.

Round Table opened in October 2010 on the Wednesday before the Auburn football game. It took the place of Ghost Soldier and was opened by the same owner, Griffin Tanner.

Tanner also owns two other local bars on the Square: The Levee and The Cellar.

He said he thinks the business will be a success and is happy the restaurant has opened.

The new restaurant is doing something different and focuses not only on the drinking atmosphere, but also on serving quality food.

"The Square needed a breakfast place, so we based it around a breakfast place and Southern-style restaurant," he said. "We make plate lunches with a daily special. You're always going to get something fresh and ready to order that day with

good taste and great flavor."

Round Table has recently added a new dinner menu that features fine dining to compete with other restaurants on the Square.

Before opening Round Table, Griffin said he tried to think of the best possible way to make use of the restaurant and space by adding breakfast items.

"My favorite part is that it's a place where I can get breakfast on the Square," Tanner said. "But I enjoy the nightlife with the patio also."

The bar features an upstairs and downstairs with food served throughout the restaurant.

In the back of the restaurant, there is an outside patio with tabled seating, where both food and drinks can be served.

"There are not many places on the Square with a great patio, and the Round Table definitely offers that," Tanner said.

Other people around Oxford and staff members at the restaurant said they are looking forward to seeing



Griffin Tanner and Geoff Denham stand in the downstairs area of Round Table. Tanner and Denham co-own the restaurant/bar, which is located on the Square.

what Round Table will bring.

"The atmosphere is really laid back and comfortable, and I really like working there," Caroline Williamson, waitress at Round Table, said. "The business has really been picking up the past couple of weeks."

"You really can't go wrong with anything on the menu, and the outside patio is wonderful to have, especially since the weather is get-

ting nicer."

All-purpose menu items include chicken spaghetti, country fried steak, meatloaf, stuffed pork loins and grits and gravy.

"I've been there several times to drink with a few friends," Beau Windham, Ole Miss senior, said.

"The atmosphere is laid back, and the food is pretty good also. I recommend it."

Tanner said Round Table also has crawfish on the patio Friday and Saturday each weekend, as well as all-you-can-eat pancakes for \$5 on Mondays.

Round Table is open Monday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and the bar is open Saturday through Wednesday 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., 1 a.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and is closed on Sundays.

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Barksdale Honors College Presents Annual Awards

BY JAKE THOMPSON
The Daily Mississippian

Two honors college students will have the opportunity to have new experiences after winning an exclusive award.

Billy Jean Forrest is interested in exploring health care in Mississippi because she never had it, and Martina Coteló wants to explore her German-Jewish ancestry because her grandmother sought asylum in a foreign land.

Coteló, of Oxford, and Forrest, of Randolph, are winners of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College's 2011 Barksdale Award, which granted each of them \$5,000 to fund their studies.

"Both students presented projects that remind people that attention must be paid to human stories and personal needs," honors college dean Douglass Sullivan-Gonzalez said in a press release issued by the University.

Coteló, who was born in Uruguay and lived there until moving to Oxford in 2001, will travel to Montevideo, Uruguay this summer to dive into her grandmother's history as a German-Jew who immigrated to Uruguay to escape

Nazi persecution. Before her death two-and-a-half years ago, Coteló's grandmother began sending her portions of her life story.

"Since I proposed my project, my aunt in Montevideo has discovered more of my grandmother's letters, documents and diaries," Coteló said. "This is the part that I am most nervous and excited about.

"I have no idea what kind of information will be recorded in these letters, and I can't wait to combine it with the narratives she sent me. This puzzle will be the most challenging part of the project, but I think it will also be the most rewarding."

Coteló's goal for this project is to share the information and stories first with her family, and then contact organizations and museums that might be interested in her findings.

"Martina's commitment to engage her grandmother's history represents one of the fundamental questions that all humans strive to answer," Sullivan-Gonzalez said. "From where have we come?"

Forrest, the daughter of farmers who could not afford health care and was born at home because of it, plans to create and

conduct a survey to determine how rural Mississippians feel about health care reform and what specific measures they wish to see enacted.

"I hope that this information can be the gateway toward creating the political will-power to enact lasting reform which is specifically catered to the needs of Mississippians," Forrest said.

"Billy Jean has dedicated herself to responding to the overwhelming needs of rural health care and the underwhelming strategies now in place," Sullivan-Gonzalez said.

Forrest will begin pre-testing in May, and in June she will start to distribute the survey to community health centers in Northeast Mississippi.

The two students received their awards during Spring Convocation this past Thursday.

The award is given to students who propose ambitious, independent programs of study, research or humanitarian endeavors.

The Barksdale Awards were created to encourage students to test themselves in environments without the built-in safeties of a classroom, teaching lab or library.



BOTH PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College members Martina Coteló, left, and Billy Jean Forrest, right, are the recipients of the 2011 Barksdale Award. Each will receive \$5,000 to further their research.



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Rebel basketball fans wear fake beards and hold signs in honor of Chris Warren's last home game.

Before Saturday's game, Warren led the nation in free throw percentage with 93.9 percent.



ADDISON DENT | The Daily Mississippian

RATES,

continued from page 1

Public Service Forgiveness and MTAG to help students avoid defaulting.

Knight said on top of what Mississippi does, the University works with students to attempt to combat defaulting on bonds.

"We know everything about every student who takes a student loan: personal background, major, financial situation, etc.," Knight said. "We analyze the patterns and trends to predict the students who will default so we can put in more effort for those situations."

When it comes to defaulting

on bonds, not all degrees are created equal, Knight said.

"The degrees with the highest number of default loans are criminal justice majors and law students," Knight said.

"We see a high drop-out rate for criminal justice students and a decrease in the amount of law students who are hired by firms."

Kevin Cronin, editor of the Law Review at the University of Alabama, said that for those seeking a law degree, it is important to stand out.

"The competition for law students nationwide is increas-

ingly difficult and now depends heavily on work experience and valuable connections," Cronin said.

Knight said students intending to graduate should not be afraid to take loans, however.

"The more you owe, the less likely you are to default," Knight said.

"This is due to the fact that graduates with higher education degrees are more applicable for higher paying jobs.

"Higher education is the key to a global economy, and if we do not invest in that we won't compete."

Fresh, local food available year-round



ALL PHOTOS BY CARLEE HILL | The Daily Mississippian

The Farmer’s Market, located on North Lamar, is Oxford’s one-stop shop for local produce. It offers an array of fresh produce, with hand-written labels describing which town, state or country the produce is from. All of the meat is processed in-house at Stan’s Country Store, and Brown Family Dairy of Yocona, sells pasteurized, non-homogenized milk.

BY CARLEE HILL
The Daily Mississippian

Although spring is around the corner, many outdoor farmers markets are still closed, which can make it difficult to find fresh, local groceries.

The Farmers Market, a green-grocer located on North Lamar, is a one-stop shop for local produce, obscure spices, international fare and artisan meats and cheeses.

The Farmers Market has bushel-loads of character, from the handwoven shopping baskets to the handwritten labels describing which town, state or country the produce is from.

The shelves are stocked with local goods, including Papa’s BBQ sauce, Thames Comeback sauce and bread from Honey Bee Bakery and Lusa.

Deaton’s Bee Farm, in Walls, produces the market’s honey. Billy Ray’s Farm in Yocona supplies its milk and butter.

The local produce varies based

on what is in season, and what cannot be grown locally comes from a few distributors and large produce houses out of Birmingham and Memphis.

“We try to do as much local stuff as possible, but, of course, you can’t be entirely local. For example, you can’t get citrus or bananas here,” Liz Coppola, owner of the Farmers Market, said. “The only things you can find local right now are greens like collard greens and turnip greens and root vegetables like turnips, rutabagas and sweet potatoes. In the spring time, you can get everything, like kale, brussels sprouts, green spinaches, lettuces and broccoli—things that can’t quite stand up to summer heat.”

The Farmers Market also offers an assortment of artisan meats. All of the meat is processed in-house at Stan’s Country Store, a business in Batesville owned by Frank Coppola, Liz’s husband.

Almost 50 percent of the meat produced at Stan’s Country Store

is sold at the Farmers’ Market and, like the produce, the meat selection is seasonal.

“They do all the cutting and curing of the meats; they don’t buy anything that is already cut,” Liz said.

The pork comes from hog farmer Stan Holcomb in Como, who originally built the store.

The Farmers Market offers locally-pastured beef from Brown Dairy Farm.

“(Owner of Brown Dairy Farms, Billy Ray Brown) now has beef cattle as well as dairy cattle, so we are getting cows from him,” Liz said. “After the cows are slaughtered, the beef goes out to Stan’s and it will hang for around three weeks, and then we cut it.”

For many locavores, the idea of buying local means that customers can buy what they want and not what major, chain grocers want them to buy.

“In beef for instance, the big box stores push you,” Frank said. “They want you to buy two

things, and that’s steaks and hamburgers. It is a very simple way to break the cow down for them. The top of the cow becomes steaks and the bottom of the cow becomes hamburgers. But there are a lot of really good cuts that are in there, that get lost in there and that are economical.”

Liz said the benefit of running a small grocery store is being able to listen to the customers. The inventory is based on what customers say they want and what they cannot find.

“It’s good for them, and it’s good for us,” she said.

Oxford local and frequent customer Daniel Morrow shops at the Farmers Market twice a week.

“Even though everything in there isn’t local, or not in an hour’s drive, or whatever you want to define local as, they make as much of an effort to be as local as possible,” Morrow said. “Everything that they sell, they have researched. Everything seems to

be not as processed and good for you, unlike what you would get at Kroger.”

Buying local not only supports a more sustainable food system, it supports an entire community.

“(It) keeps your community strong, and it keeps your money in the community,” Liz said. “If you go to Walmart and spend \$500, then it’s great for Walmart. That money doesn’t necessarily stay in your community, but if you were to spend that money at a local merchant, then that merchant will turn around and, in all likelihood, would spend it with other local people.”

The Farmers Market makes buying local easy and affordable. By planting dollars close to home, the community can grow.

“To be able to talk about your food and find out where it came from, to know the farmers that did it and know how they did it—I think it’s not just beneficial, but at some point it becomes necessary,” Frank said.



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A morning with Bottletree Bakery



ALL PHOTOS BY MIRIAM TAYLOR | The Daily Mississippian

LEFT: Bottletree worker, Laura Robuch, is up early to prepare for the morning rush. MIDDLE: Bottletree Bakery sits off the Square. It has been a staple in Oxford for the past 16 years. RIGHT: Bruno Delacruz and Austin Agent goof off while working in the back of Bottletree Bakery.

BY MIRIAM TAYLOR
The Daily Mississippian

It was 6:30 a.m., and Bottletree Bakery was empty. The only sounds came from the bakers in the back and the hum and click of the coffee-maker.

"Want some coffee?" Laura Robuch, who works at the bakery, asked.

I accepted gratefully. "Do you still get it imported from Oregon?" I asked.

"Every week," she replied as she set the steaming mug in front of me.

The imported coffee is not the only thing unique about Bottletree.

The white-bricked building not only functions as a bakery; it also caters and hosts rehearsal dinners and birthday parties. It is also now open at night from 6 p.m.-9 p.m., which is convenient for students looking for an alternative to the library.

The bakery is a jack-of-all-trades, much like its owner.

Cynthia Gerlach came to Oxford intending to study physics. Instead, she did her thesis on folk artist B.F. Perkins and opened a bakery.

That was 16 years ago.

The bakery has since become a staple of Oxford.

The door swung open, and Cynthia hurried in. A blur of curly blonde hair in a grey hoodie, she swept past me and went immediately to the stereo to turn on NPR.

"It's always NPR from 7-9 in the morning," Brents Herron said.

After that, the radio is up for grabs.

"We all switch up, but some people don't always care for my music," he said. "I never get tired of the 'O Brother Where Art Thou' soundtrack. So what?"

The bakers who had been hiding in the back began to bring out the morning's goods, and Robuch and Herron divided to

display each new rack.

"This is only my third cup," Austin Agent, one of the behind-the-scenes bakers, said. "I got to sleep in today. I only got here at 3 a.m."

My mouth dropped at his response, and he chuckled when I changed the subject and commented on his very literary-sounding name.

"Yeah, I've been told that before," he said as he finished the coffee and headed back to the delightful smelling room where the secrets of Bottletree reside.

Robuch has a degree from the University of Georgia, where she studied painting. Herron studied real estate at Ole Miss. The girl from Georgia and the man from Tennessee continued to banter as they prepared for the morning, and I sipped my coffee.

"My favorite painting is the crazy alligator," Laura gestured to the far wall, and I turned to see a brightly colored painting. It is one of what seems to be a hun-

dred, covering every square inch of the bakery. She turned to ask Gerlach who it is by, and Gerlach rattled off details about the Jimmy Sudduth painting instead.

She is so familiar with the works of art that there was no need for her to look up from the king cake she was covering to see which painting Laura mentioned.

"I have a lot of favorites," Gerlach said. She turned and pointed to a dull green sign that hung heavy against the wooden wall. "This one was originally from James' Food Center. Mr. James was like an adopted grandfather to me. Taught me all about starting and running a business. There's plenty of times that I think about the fact that this bakery wouldn't be here without him. So, I asked for the aisle nine sign when they closed. Breads, bottles and beers."

Everything in Bottletree has a story.

See BOTTLETREE, PAGE 8

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Spotlight: NPHC Sororities

BY ASHLEY D. BALL
The Daily Mississippian

The National Pan-Hellenic Council is comprised of nine African-American Greek organizations, four of which are sororities: Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Zeta Phi Beta and Sigma Gamma Rho. Although all four organizations are different, each sorority firmly advocates service, scholastic achievement, sisterhood and leadership. “We strive for excellence not only in academics, but in the implementation of our service initiatives and programs,” Gloria Howell, reporter and NPHC representative of Alpha Kappa Alpha, said. “We know that our chancellor, Dr. Jones, has placed a lot of emphasis on service leadership, and that’s what we are about. We

are hardworking, intellectual young women who care a lot about our prestigious institution as well as this community; we want to do our part in making it better.” According to Howell, the organizations take great honor in service on campus and in the Oxford community. They do not want anyone to take for granted the hard work they do every day, which includes March of Dimes, fundraisers, teen empowerment functions and other philanthropy events. “We all got to where we are today because someone helped us along the way,” Keithshawna Williams, chapter president of Sigma Gamma Rho, said. “Being a humble servant is living by the theory of paying it forward. Community service is a major foundation for Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority.”

The sororities are also strong in faith. “I have to start off by saying that Jesus humbly served others first,” Kiara Smith, NPHC rep and community service chair of Zeta Phi Beta, said. “Service isn’t just a sorority principle, but something we truly love to do. There’s no greater feeling than knowing that you have made a difference or impacted someone else’s life by simply volunteering your time to tutor, painting churches, cleaning up the highway or giving meals to the less fortunate.” Unlike Panhellenic Council sororities, NPHC sororities do not have a formal “rush” or recruitment process. “As with the other NPHC organizations, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority does not participate in the recruitment process; however, we do participate in

membership intake,” Jamesha Graves, chapter president of Delta Sigma Theta, said. “Our chapter does not have an assigned, permanent time or semester when we conduct intake; however, as quoted from the NPHC, the process includes observation, invitation, selection, membership intake, instruction/orientation/education and embellishment. It will be highly advertised when we will conduct membership intake.” According to members, joining a sorority has many rewarding benefits, including lifelong friendships. “I know that I can call (sorority sisters) when things aren’t looking as great as I’d like them to, just for a laugh or a word of encouragement, or even if I need to shed a few tears and vent,” Howell said. “Although

we all have our different personalities, at the end of the day, we’re there for each other.” “I am an only child, and seeking lifelong friendships was one of my reasons for joining,” Williams said. “I have formed a wonderful relationship with my chapter sisters, as well as with members of our local alumni chapter.” NPHC sororities are often seen as clubs for socializing with parties and step shows, but they are serious about putting business first. “A lot of times, people only see the ‘fun’ side of our organization,” Ashley Isom, NPHC president and chapter treasurer of Delta Sigma Theta, said. “While stepping, scrolling and partying are visible components of our organizations, we are a highly functional business entity as well.”

BOTTLETREE,

continued from page 7

“The mirrors are from the Bon Temps café — opened in 1932,” Gerlach continued. “I made all the tables and stripped the floors. Each thing on the menu stands for something more than a muffin or a sandwich. The Trailblazer is named for the Portland

Trailblazers, a little reminder of home.” The Portland native has mixed her West Coast home with southern charm and created a hybrid cafe that is more of a community than a business. Even during rush hour, people

are content. Foul moods do not last long in a bakery overrun with good food, better coffee and warm conversations. Herron opened the door, and immediately a crowd of people sauntered in: a group of dancers who had just finished their morning workout, a mother and daughter swapping the latest news and a well-dressed man who sat himself down at the end of the counter with his paper. Immediately Laura poured him a cup of coffee. “I wouldn’t say I come here every day,” Sam Thomas, a university employee, said. Herron shook his head and laughed over the man’s shoulder. “OK, maybe

I do. But I don’t come on Mondays.” “Of course not,” Herron teased, “We’re not open then.” Herron, Robuch and Gerlach continued to greet regulars as they filed in. Names and questions about families and work and weddings were exchanged over the counter. “I know most of our regulars’ orders,” Robuch said. “Except for this one,” she nodded towards Thomas, “He likes to switch things up.” “I like to keep them on their toes,” Thomas said. “I can’t let them get too complacent.” By 8:15 a.m., the place was full, and I could barely hear NPR over

the buzzing conversations, clink of spoons and satisfied sighs from contented customers. “I once had a man come in with a paint chip,” Gerlach said. “He asked me to make him special pot pies with crusts the exact color as that paint chip. If I ever found that paint chip, I would frame it and hang it over the counter. We get some interesting people in here sometimes, but we also get some genuinely great ones. I’ve had a doctor and his wife who come here every day since I started. My first trip to Oxford, I got off the bus at 7:15 in the morning and now I own the bakery next door to that station.”

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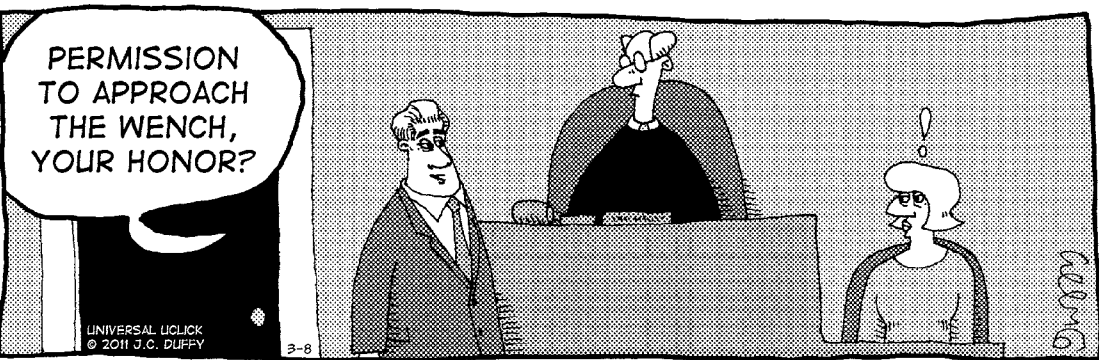
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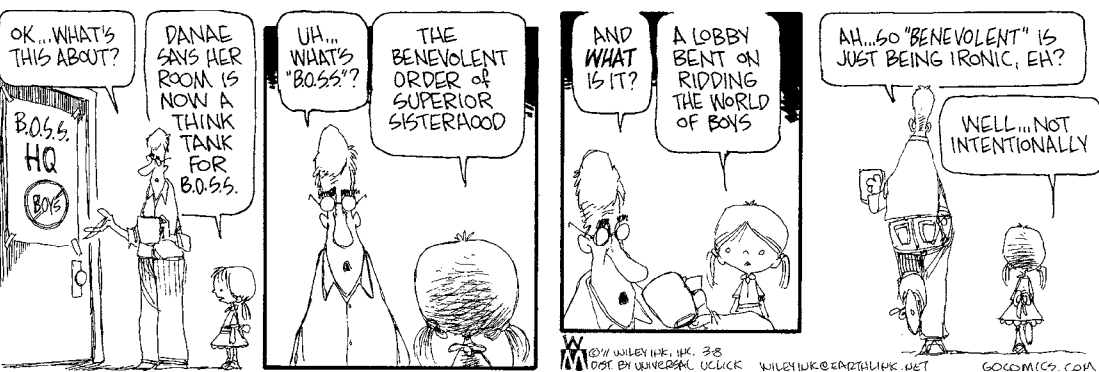
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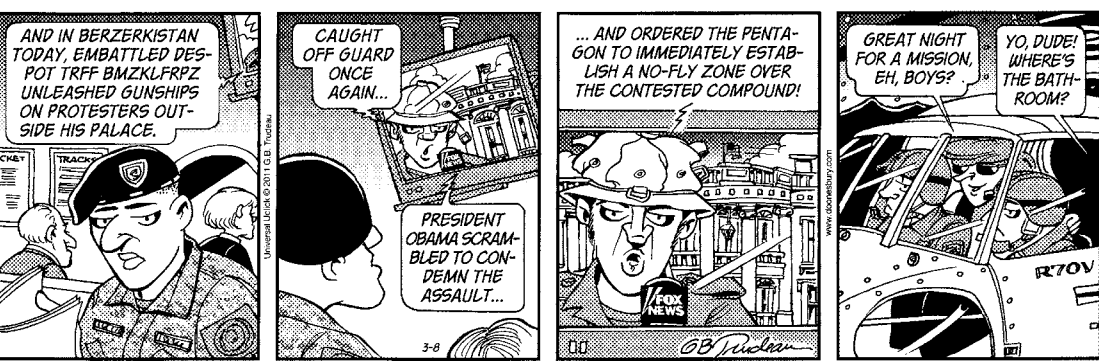
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17 Dice throw
18 Greenish-blue
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26 Strip
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31 Change
32 Pipe wood
33 Tattoo word
36 It has a home page
37 "Nick of Time" singer
38 Radar O'Reilly's drink
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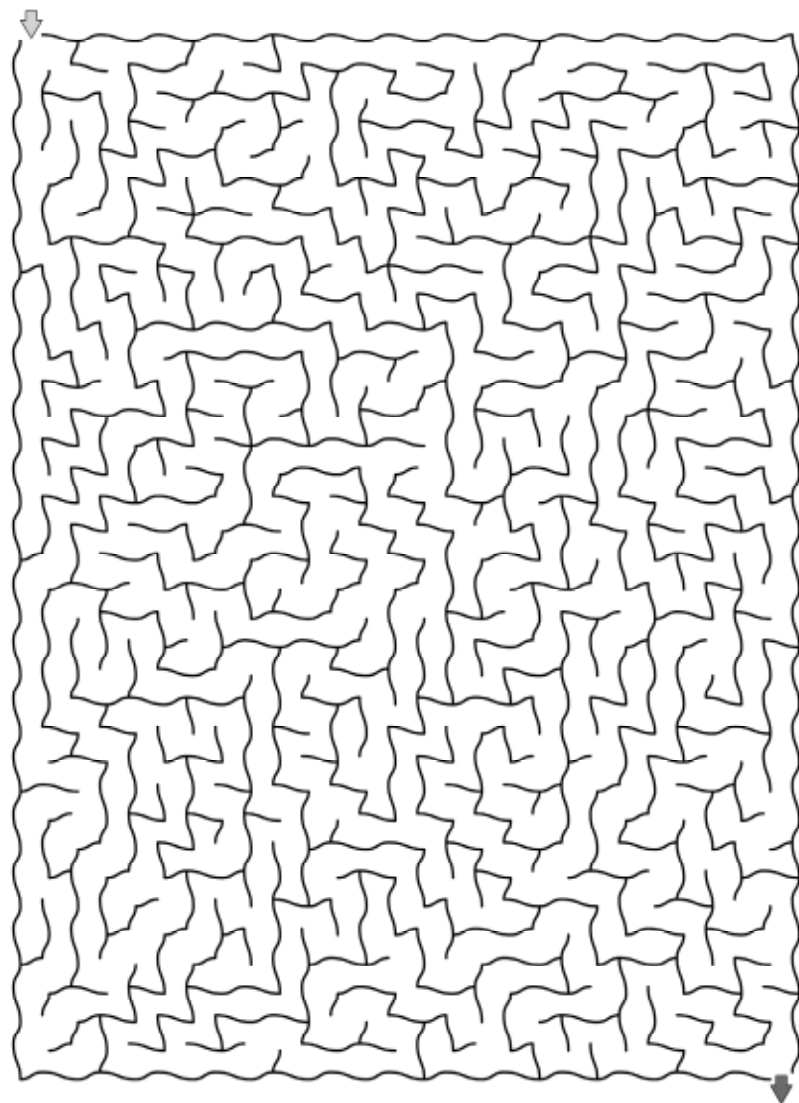
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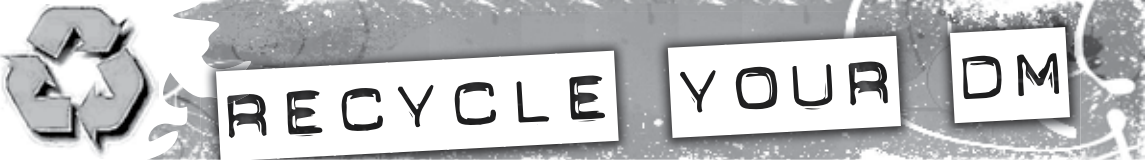
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BREWER,

continued from page 12

consider me.”

Nearly two months after landing in Oxford, Brewer and his wife Rhonda – the couple also have a daughter, Lauren, at the University of Missouri – still haven’t completely moved from their home in Stillwater, Okla. after leaving Oklahoma State. Brewer went to work for Ole Miss the day he was hired, packing a U-Haul with clothes and office supplies and heading out on the road to recruit for the Rebels.

“Between moving and getting ready for spring ball, getting a playbook together and getting all the things you have to get done when you move, it’s tough,” Brewer. “We still haven’t moved officially yet, but we’ll get (to Oxford) eventually.”

usually.”

Brewer arrives at Ole Miss as wide receivers coach in a year that saw the Rebels sign one of the premier wide receivers classes in the country.

Ole Miss fought off a late push by Alabama to sign highly-touted South Panola wide receiver Nick Brassell, and landed two other nationally-recruited receiver prospects in Madison Central’s Tobias Singleton and Raleigh’s Dante Moncrief.

TJ Worthy and Collins Moore, both Alabama natives, round out the class.

“We’re looking forward to see (out of the freshman class) who can come to the front and play early,” Brewer said.

The newcomers will be

needed as the Rebels only have two pure receivers, rising junior Melvin Harris and rising sophomore Ja-Mes Logan, who caught touchdown passes in 2010. Brewer said he hasn’t been able to see the returning receivers catch balls yet, but likes what he’s seen from watching last year’s film.

He’ll get a chance to see his receivers live on March 28th – the first day of spring football for the Rebels – and will coach his first game as a full-fledged member of the Rebels staff on Sept. 3 against BYU. Then, Brewer will coaching in the same stadium that his father did 18 years ago.

“It’s special being back here and being a part of the Ole Miss family,” Brewer said.

ATTENDANCE,

continued from page 11

students, used to stand up and chant “Defense!” in crucial situations. The floor shook.

So for those who say Ole Miss just isn’t a basketball school, you’re wrong. We’ve never brought in revenue or recruited as well as other SEC schools, but we used to be the best team in the Western division. Opponents hated playing in the Tad Pad. We were scrappy. Players fed off of the crowd.

They counted on the crowd. If they lost, they didn’t have to worry about whether fans would come back. The crowd was a constant.

Now, Andy Kennedy is trying to build a championship program and he has to walk around to Greek houses giving

away free tickets just to try to get students to come. It’s not enough to just come out for the Kentucky game (which we won with the help of the crowd).

An inconsistent crowd leads to an inconsistent team. If we ever realize that, we just might be able to produce another Sweet Sixteen squad.

We beat Arkansas 84-74 on Saturday to finish the regular season 19-12 (7-9 SEC). In their home finale, Warren and Graham were spectacular. They combined for 39 points and shot 9-of-13 from beyond the three-point arc. They received a standing ovation from the patchwork crowd when they exited the court.

You probably saw it on TV.

The Divine Dramedy of Brian Davies



BY ANDREW DICKSON
Columnist

Dear readers, thanks for making time for me today.

I hope you don’t mind me hiding under the covers of this newspaper — it’s been some time since my last confession, and after comparing my life to the Honor Code described in this column, I’m afraid I sin like a champion.

The Salt Lake Tribune reported last Wednesday that BYU center Brian Davies had been dismissed from the team after he admitted to having violated the BYU “Honor Code.”

I won’t get into the details of his transgression — nor should you — but will instead give my best Joseph Smith impersonation and try to explain how we arrived at this point.

BYU is a private university located in Utah and owned by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. It is America’s largest religious university; approximately 98 percent of the more than 34,000 students that attend BYU adhere to the faith of the LDS Church (colloquially known as the “Mormon Church”).

All BYU students, regardless of religious backgrounds, are required to follow the Honor Code, which mandates that they lead a chaste and honorable life, observe dress and grooming standards, participate in church services, avoid the use of profane language and abstain from alcohol, tobacco, caffeine and substance abuse — among other tenets that aim to keep students away from bad sects.

BYU Basketball

Coach Dave Rose spoke on the code recently, saying that “(Everyone) who comes to BYU — every student, if they’re an athlete or not — makes a commitment when they come. A lot of people try to judge if this is right or wrong, but it’s a commitment they make.”

The Honor Code dates back to the 1940s, when it was used to discipline students guilty of academic dishonesty. The code was expanded to encompass the rules it covers today in 1957, and though it has been a topic of discussion in the past, Davies’ dismissal from the team at this point in the college basketball season has thrust it back into the spotlight.

That spotlight is already bright this season as the Cougars boast a top-10 ranking and Jimmer Fredette, the nation’s most sensational player. The subtraction of Davies — who averaged 11.1 PPG and led the team in rebounding with 6.2 a contest — was initially looked upon as huge blow to BYU’s chances at landing a No. 1 seed in this month’s NCAA Tournament.

The impact of his absence was felt much sooner, however, as the Cougars responded to their teammate’s dismissal with an 82-64 home loss to New Mexico the same day Davies’ decision was announced. Though they bounced back with a blowout win over Wyoming to close out their regular season Saturday, the loss of Davies will make advancement in the NCAA Tournament more difficult.

Now, I’d like to echo Coach Rose’s sentiments on players choosing to make a commitment to the code — it’s as valid of a point that you’ll find in this story. Further, I do not question BYU — a private institution — on its authority to uphold its standards,

strict as they may be.

However, the religion major inside of me is perplexed at how the University allowed this young man’s dirty laundry, pun painfully intended, to be aired to the rest of America. Is this not entirely contradictory to the Mormon faith where personal problems can be discussed and resolved with the help of a bishop much like one might discuss his or her transgressions in confession?

One would be naive to believe that BYU would trust the Associated Press not to dig up why the starting center for the nation’s hottest team was dismissed in early March. The University knew its reputation was on the line and made sure to publicly wash its hands of one of its own instead of merely suspending him for a “violation of team rules” and handling the situation in house after the season concludes and the hype surrounding the program dies down.

Brigham Young University is practicing conspicuous religiosity — and not in the way a bearded Orthodox Jew dressed in a hat and heavy black clothing walking down the street minding his own damn business is practicing it. BYU is sending a very public message to universities everywhere: “We’re not like the others. We stand by our principles — the scarlet letter men stand alone.”

Author Aldous Huxley once wrote, “The martyrs go hand in hand into the arena; they are crucified alone.”

Sorry, Brian Davies — I know you aren’t the only one guilty of breaking the code, but you happened to be the golden calf BYU used to remind the country just how special they are.

Oh, to be the chosen one.

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Woeful basketball attendance a new phenomenon



BY TAYLOR MCGRAW
Columnist

Shame on those of you who are down on Ole Miss basketball.

Chris Warren and Zach Graham played their last regular season game at the Tad Pad on Saturday, and most of you stayed home.

Sure, we had some tough losses this year. Mississippi State swept us. We blew a 20-point lead to a hapless Auburn team last week. But for Pete's sake, it was senior day and half the student section was empty.

Most of my friends gave me excuses for not coming. "We suck" was popular.

Well, I went and supported my "sucky" team. I signed the "Thank you" posters for Chris and Zach. I got goosebumps watching their career highlights on the Jumbotron. I even put on one of the adhesive fake Chris Warren beards they were giving away. I loved

every minute of the game.

Michael Thompson and the athletics marketing team put together an incredible game day experience, save for one key component: fans. A lot of my friends complain about the Tad Pad and tell me we need to build a new basketball stadium. That's hard to justify when we have 2,000 empty seats on senior day against a Southeastern Conference West rival.

The 2001 Sweet Sixteen team was honored at half-time of Saturday's game. I got nostalgic watching clips of Raheem Lockhart making thunderous left-handed dunks, Justin Reed swatting opponents' shots and Jason Harrison nailing threes over defenders a foot taller than he is.

The Tad Pad those guys played in was standing room only for every SEC game. Basketball was a big deal. A sea of students decked out in red "Rod Squad" T-shirts would turn their backs to the court, pop open newspapers and yell "Sucks!" after the name of each opposing team starter was announced. Everyone, not just

See ATTENDANCE, PAGE 11

Brewer returns home



ALEX EDWARDS | The Daily Mississippian

BY PAUL KATOOL
Sports Editor

While in high school, Gunter Brewer walked the sidelines of Vaught-Hemingway Stadium with his father, former Ole Miss coach Billy Brewer, who directed the Rebels from 1983 to 1993.

He remembers watching his father guide the Rebels to their first bowl game in over a decade during his first year on the job. He also remembers when his father's 1991 squad landed Ole Miss its first New Year's Day bowl in 22 years.

Now, nearly two decades later, Brewer gets his own chance to create a legacy with

the Rebels as Ole Miss' newly hired associate head coach, passing game coordinator and wide receivers coach. Brewer joined the Rebel coaching staff on Jan. 19 after spending six seasons with Oklahoma State, where he held various positions on offense and coached last year's Biletnikoff winner – given to the nation's top receiver — Justin Blackmon.

While Brewer could have remained at Oklahoma State, which returns Blackmon and majority of last year's prolific Cowboy offense, his love for Ole Miss led him to return home to a place that has been a long-standing tradition for the Brewer family.

Billy Brewer currently resides

in Oxford, while Gunter's son Keaton is a senior at Ole Miss. Gunter Brewer was a graduate assistant with the Rebels from 1988-90, and his brother Brett Brewer was a punter for the Rebels and lettered in 1984.

"Ole Miss was a place that I always hoped to come back to and be able to work when I had some more experience," said Brewer, who has also been an assistant at Marshall and North Carolina. "The job came available when (Ole Miss coach) Houston Nutt and I started visiting. We started talking about the role that he would like for me to play and I was honored that he would

See BREWER, PAGE 11

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